BEDFORD

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report

of

Medical Officer of Health

FOR

1914.

To the Bedford Rural District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to lay before you my Annual Report for the year 1914, on the Sanitary and Public Health conditions, accompanied by the usual tables showing vital statistics of the District.

This has been a very eventful year, and our hospital accommodation has been severely taxed to meet the strain put upon it by the amount of infectious disease that has occurred amongst the troops billetted in and around Bedford.

POPULATION OF THE DISTRICT.

I have to record a slight increase which is estimated in the usual way. This increase is quite distinct from the importation of troops and national reservists incidental to the war conditions.

BIRTH RATE.

The births registered are 346, to which are added 9 occurring elsewhere, but belonging to residents, who are, for the time being, domiciled in another locality.

The birth rate is 18·36, showing a slight increase on the previous year, but it still must be considered extremely low.

DEATH RATE.

There has been an increase among the deaths, due almost entirely to a higher mortality amongst those of advaneed ages. In all rural districts, where many young people leave their birth place, the number of persons of an advanced age must be on the increase, naturally giving a greater death rate among those who have reached maturity.

The death rate is 14·0, the highest for several years. The death rate corrected for the sake of comparison with other districts, works out at 11·23. It will be seen that this is rather higher than one would expect in a healthy rural district, the reason for the increased rate I have mentioned above.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

There have been 25 deaths, making a death-rate of 70·4. I had the pleasure last year of recording a low rate under this heading, but it has not been maintained, and in fact this year it is the highest since 1908. I consider one-third of the deaths are due to preventive

causes. In this district the figures on which one has to base one's calculations are not many, and therefore averages are liable to fluctuate considerably, and give erroneous impressions, but at the same time there is a wastage in infant life which, I think, could be avoided. The only means we have at present is to educate the parents in the proper care and feeding of their offspring. Nearly half of the illegitimate children die.

MORTALITY OF CHILDREN.

For the 25 deaths that occur during the first year of life, there are only eleven during the next four, making 36 for the period ending with the fifth year. This again, shows an increase over last year's record. The majority of them are due to infectious diseases, which are unduly spread from excessive crowding of the living room.

MORTALITY OF THE AGED.

150 have died over the age of 65; between the ages of 45 and 65, there were 51 deaths, making 201 out of a total of 274. These deaths with the loss of infant life nearly make up the list of deaths for the year.

PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT.

The District lies in the North of Bedfordshire, and may be said to consist of the Northern third of the County, omitting the Borough of Bedford, the Urban District of Kempston, and the Rural District of Eaton Socon. The River Ouse pursues a tortuous route, obliquely from north-west to south-east, forming a wide valley with undulating hills on either side. In the valley are found gravel and alluvial deposits, while oolite and Oxford clay form the geological formation of the higher ground.

Agriculture is the main industry, but some water and steam flour mills and leather factories also find employment. Three large brick-making works at Wootton and several smaller ones elsewhere, create work for a good number of the inhabitants.

The labourers are provided with medical attention, and sickness benefit by the National Health Insurance, while their wives and children obtain professional assistance and medicine by means of local village clubs and the National Deposit Society. Poor Law relief has considerably declined since the introduction of Old Age Pensions; now only unfortunates seek out-door relief.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

Water Supply.

The following five villages are supplied with water from public mains :—

Village.	Source of Supply.
Wymington	From the Rushden Water Works.
Cardington	From the Biggleswade Water Board.
Elstow	„ „ „ „
Goldington	„ „ „ „
Renhold	„ „ „ „

The following three villages are partially supplied from private sources :—

Village.	Source of Supply.
Harrowden	Biggleswade Water Board.
Biddenham	Bedford Water Works.
Turvey	Deep Well.

The rest of the District is supplied with water in three ways :—

1. From shallow wells which in the majority of cases are not protected from surface drainage and in consequence are liable to be polluted. This supply cannot be considered satisfactory.

2. From deep wells which as a rule have no protection from surface pollution.

3. From ponds and water holes in fields and along the road sides. The source of this supply needs only to be mentioned in order to be condemned.

Goldington.—The inhabitants of this village are served with greensand water from the Biggleswade Water Board, except certain outlying portions of the Parish. It has now been decided to extend the main along the Putnoe road as far as the Kimbolton Road to supply the houses which have been erected along these two roads. A loan has been obtained for this extension and also for an extension from the Bedford road to a new estate where considerable building is now in progress, and so anxious are the owners of the various properties concerned to obtain water that a fair proportion of the cost has been found by them.

Sharnbrook and Souldrop.—During the year under consideration, an owner of property in Sharnbrook and Souldrop has decided to lay pipes, and to bring water from the Rushden Water Works to his residence and supply his estate in Souldrop on the way. I have brought this matter before your notice, and it has been duly considered. I recommend that the Council should undertake the water supply of

the two villages concerned, and allow the owner of the estate referred to, to take his pipe off the main at the most convenient site to himself. The Council directed the Water Committee to go into the matter, and gave them power to have certain wells analysed. The Committee have completed the analysis, and are still considering the question.

I have in previous years referred to certain villages to which a public water supply should be taken. The villages are :—Great Barford, Roxton, Cople, Eastcotts, Wilstead and Clapham, and to these should be added Wilden and Ravensden.

Your Council, through the Water Committee, have devoted a considerable portion of their time to the question of supplying water to several villages. In view of a further increasing demand for good water, and the heavy cost on villages entailed when taken singly, your Committee has considered a comprehensive scheme which would embrace the area of six fresh villages and link them all up to the present villages that are supplied with water from the Biggleswade Water Board.

The great advantages of this scheme would be :—

1. To give an abundance of good water to all who live in these villages (the present supply being very often of a questionable quality).

2. To lessen the cost that would be incurred if each village went in for a water supply by itself. A considerable amount could be saved by combination.

3. It would be possible to supply outlying villages, whereas now any attempt to serve them is frustrated by the inability to find water locally.

4. Large pipes could be used to maintain the pressure and keep an even supply.

The question of good water is not always appreciated by those who derive the most benefit. The ultimate decision for its adoption or rejection rests too much upon the financial question, and the demand of health conditions, I am sorry to say, is to play a minor part. We all know if we ignore and break the laws of nature we have to deal with a most uncompromising master, and the full penalty will be exacted sooner or later. The introduction into the system of harmful and dangerous products throw great stress on the organs of elimination, which like a machine is only built to do a certain amount of work ; for instance, if two men buy a farm implement like a binder, for harvesting their crops, the one uses his machine roughly and cuts two hundred acres per year with it ; the other looks carefully after his machine and only cuts fifty acres, of course the second machine will be in good order when the first is disposed of for scrap iron.

The same argument applies to the human body if we consume materials which require excessive work for their elimination and destruction on the part of the phagocytes of the body, either the phagocytosis will fail, producing acute illness, or the organs will become clogged and degenerative changes ensue, wearing a man's body out before his time. The average life of man is about 45 years. Surely this must be considered too early a termination to a man's existence, and it is necessary for sanitarians to lengthen it. There are considerations other than those referred to, for instance, a plentiful supply of water is conducive to habits of cleanliness, and cleanliness, we are told, is next to Godliness. Again, reckoning from the financial aspect, soft water is economical for washing purposes. Hard water entails more labour, waste of soap, unnecessary use of soda and washing powders. I have made enquiries from women who do their own washing, and I am told by them that this excessive waste due to hard water, incurs an expenditure of quite twopence per week. Some of the schemes that have been brought forward costing the cottager about twopence per week have fallen through on account of expense. If only the people would stop to consider that they are getting good water for nothing, I am of the opinion that many of these water schemes would be considered with much greater favour.

I hope the Members of this Council will study the question, and the cost of water supplies generally, and realise the importance of it to health. If we will only take a broader view of the whole matter, and make a combination of several villages, we will find the cost on the whole not so excessive when it is distributed amongst all the villages concerned.

POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS.

As I have recommended in my previous reports, pollution of of streams and rivers have occurred for considerable periods, and the offenders claim a right from long usage. In those cases where nuisances are created, your Sanitary Inspector has asked for their amendment, which has been complied with.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

New Fenlake..—I reported in my last two annual reports that the question of sewering this hamlet should be considered. The delay in carrying out any recommendations cannot be overcome until the Bedford Borough Authorities have completed their sewage system. I hope to bring this matter forward again at a suitable time.

Wootton.—No progress has been made with the sewage disposal of this village. This should be considered at a convenient time.

PAVENHAM.—The nuisance from an open ditch in the summer time caused numerous complaints to be made. To remedy this 210 yds. of 12 in. pipe have been laid in the rear of the School, and 66 yds. of 6 in. pipe have been laid in an open ditch at the rear of the Memorial Farm to provide an outfall of sewage at a greater distance from several dwelling houses.

BIDDENHAM.—About 40 yards of new 6 in. sewer pipes have been laid on a bed of concrete to replace a badly laid sewer in boggy ground, and it has been supplied with a proper flushing chamber. Four defective iron pipe ventilating shafts fixed upon poles have been removed from the sewer in the main street, and have been replaced by a new 6 in. ventilating column fixed at the head of the sewer.

TURVEY.—A surface water drain, into which several houses discharge their slop water, emptied itself into an open ditch near the main roadway. This created a considerable nuisance, and to overcome it your Council has, on the advice of the Sanitary Inspector, to which I add my approval, had laid in Newton Lane 266 yds. of new 6 in. pipes with manholes and lampholes, and had them connected to the sewer in the main road. All the old drains have been connected to the new sewer. Other drains have also been cut off from this open ditch, the owners dealing with the sewage on their own premises.

New service water gullies have been provided by the Rural District Council and fixed by the County Council in the main street to replace defective catchpits.

Occasional complaints have been made from time to time of smells arising from the outfall near the Three Fishers' Inn. Your Sanitary Inspector was instructed to prepare some simple means of dealing with the complaints, but after taking levels and making sections of the proposed work, he found it was impossible to construct any kind of tank treatment owing to lack of fall and flooding by river water. Very expensive outfall works would have to be constructed, with pumping machinery, to properly deal with the problem. The existing outfall is cleaned out whenever occasion requires.

HARROLD.—A Committee was appointed to enquire into the complaints made about the state of the brook running from the bridge of the main road to its outfall in the river. They visited the part complained of and recommended to the Council to carry out the scheme that had been proposed by myself and your Sanitary Inspector, viz., that the invert to the brook should be concreted in a similar manner as the brook in Brook Lane. This work was, unfortunately, prevented being done by the recent excessive rains and storm water

SHARNBROOK.—A new ventilating column has been fixed near the Church, to replace a defective and unsightly iron pipe shaft fixed upon a pole. The Odell Road and Sharnbrook Park Sewage Outfall Works continue to give satisfaction.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

The systems in vogue are the pail and privy vault, with a few water closets, the latter among the better class houses where a supply of water is available. The inspection of the district continues and when it is finished I shall be able to give the figures of each kind of sanitary convenience. The conversion of privy vaults into pails still progresses, I should like to point out that the pail system, if properly worked and supervised, is a much better, healthier, and cleaner system than the old privy vault, but if neglected it is very little superior to the old method. However, it has this advantage that the insanitary condition of it can be seen and gives the owner a reminder that he should clean it. In the privy vault, the offensive condition is not detected by the eye, and "out of sight, out of mind," is an old proverb which is very applicable.

SCAVENGING.

The village of Wymington enjoys the distinction of being the only village in the District which boasts a complete scavenging system. It is a most regrettable matter that other villages do not adopt a similar method for the disposal of their refuse. Many of the Cottagers who live in villages have absolutely no place to put the contents of their ash-pits into which is deposited all kinds of decaying organic material, and in which flies breed in enormous quantities.

It has now become an established fact that flies are great carriers of disease, and we should realise that the very flies that frequent these dirty ashpits, cesspools, privy vaults, etc., pay visits to our houses, and contaminate our food.

SANITARY INSPECTIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

Mr. Chapman, the Sanitary Inspector, has supplied me with the following Nuisance Returns for 1914 :—

(1)	Defective and untrapped drainage	52
(2)	Insufficient drainage	17
(3)	Dilapidated and insanitary privies converted to pails	42
(4)	Want of light and ventilation to closets	1
(5)	Insufficient closet accommodation	5

(6)	Want of ashpits with proper covers		54
(7)	Want of protection to wells and proper coverings		16
(8)	Foul pools, ditches and water courses		15
(9)	Offensive accumulations		44
(10)	Animals kept so as to become a nuisance		12
(11)	Cases of overcrowding		3
(12)	Rooms cleansed under Sec. 46, P. H. A., 1875		14
(13)	Polluted water supplies		15
(14)	Samples of water taken from analysis		22
(15)	Water certificates granted to new houses		32
(16)	Houses without sufficient water supplies		9
(17)	Number of houses not reasonably fit, under Sec. 15, H. and T. P. Act		52
	(*a*) Windows with insufficient opening for ventilation	39	
	(*b*) Windows dilapidated	4	
	(*c*) Windows to enlarge and new, required for light and ventilation	11	
	(*d*) Dilapidated floors	27	
	(*e*) Wet floors and base of walls	24	
	(*f*) Dilapidated staircases	6	
	(*g*) Dilapidated plaster to walls and ceilings of houses (inside)	9	
	(*h*) Dilapidated walls and gables of houses (outside)	4	
	(*i*) Rooms to cleanse and whitewash	7	
	(*j*) Want of damp courses	20	
	(*k*) Want of eaves gutters to prevent damp base of walls	3	
	(*l*) Defective roofs of houses	13	
	(*m*) Want of light and ventilation to pantries	4	
	(*n*) Want of pantries to store food	3	
	(*o*) Houses with insufficient air space at rear	0	
	(*p*) Dilapidated and wet pavement	2	
(18)	Closing Orders issued under Sec. 17, H. & T.P. Act		1
(19)	Demolition orders issued		8
(20)	Houses demolished		8
(21)	Number of rooms fumigated after infectious disease		249
(22)	„ schools „ „ „		9
(23)	Want of cleanliness in cowsheds and dairies		16
	Defective drainage		7
	Defective floors		2
(24)	Want of cleanliness in bakehouses		18
	New floors required		1
(25)	Want of cleanliness to slaughterhouses		1
	New floors required and drainage		1

SUMMARY OF MATTERS DEALT WITH.

Inspections.	No.	Nuisances found.	Abated at end of Year.
House to house inspection under H. & T. P. Act ...	350	176	159
Houses and Premises under P. H. Act, 1875	382	321	297
Factories and Workshops ...	136	24	23
Cowsheds and Dairies	151	25	25
	1019	546	504

WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

I. Inspection of Workshops and Workplaces.

Premises.	Inspections.	Written Notices.	Prosecutions.
Factories	2	None	None.
Workshops / Workplaces	134	24	None.
	136	24	None.

II. Defects found in Factories, Workshops, &c.

	Found.	Remedied.	Referred to H.M. Inspector.
Want of Cleanliness	19	19	None.
Drainage of floors, etc.	2	2	None.
Other defects.....	3	2	None.
	24	23	

III. Outworkers.

There has been 1 list of Outworkers received this year.

IV. Registered Workshops,

Bakehouses	39
Laundries	7
Tailors	4
Millers	8
Gasworks	1
Dressmakers	5
Other Workshops.....	160
	224

V. Other Matters.

Notices of occupation of workshops received from H. M. Inspector	3
Report (of action taken) sent to H. M. Inspector	0

SURVEYOR'S REPORT.

Plans received:—

New Houses	56
Additions	6
Other Buildings	9
Temporary Buildings	2
	73
Foundations inspected	58
Drain tests by water	55
Completed and Intermediate Inspections	120
	233

PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS WHICH CAN BE CONTROLLED BY BYE-LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

There are no lodging houses, cellar dwellings, or offensive trades carried on in the district, and there are no bye-laws referring to these matters. Up to the present no necessity has arisen to ask the Council to draw up any bye-laws.

SCHOOLS.

The following schools have been closed on account of outbreaks of infectious disease:—

Name of School.	Department.	Disease.	Period of Closure
Biddenham	Mixed	Measles	Nov. 25—30.
„	Infants	„	Nov. 25—Dec. 16
Cople		Scarlet Fever	Oct. 26—30.
Elstow		„ „	Apl. 30—May 1.
Felmersham		Measles	Nov. 4—13. Dec. 7—21.
Great Barford	Both	„	Nov. 25—Dec. 3.
Goldington		Scarlet Fever	Feb. 9—16.
Harrold	Both	Measles	July 17—31.
Milton Ernest		Scarlet Fever	Oct. 28—Nov. 10.
Sharnbrook		Measles	Sept. 29—Oct. 16. Oct. 19—Nov. 6.
Turvey	Both	Scarlet Fever	Jan. 19—26. Feb. 2—6. Apl. 7—8.
„	Infants	Chicken Pox	Nov. 23—Dec. 4.

The schools are closed by arrangement made with the School Medical Officer, Dr. Herdman. When I am of the opinion that it is necessary to close a school, I recommend the closure to the School Medical Officer, giving my reasons. If he approves of my action he endorses it. At times we consult together.

The sanitation of the schools is supervised by the School Medical Officer.

The following is the number of schools which adopt the various forms of sanitary conveniences :—

Number with removable receptacles and pails ...	27
„ „ Water Closets.....	2
„ „ Privy Vaults	10

The question of introducing the water-carriage system into the schools at Wymington is still under consideration. Your Sanitary Inspector and myself strongly recommend this course, as the present system is a continuous source of trouble and has failed to give the satisfaction that was promised by its supporters.

MILK SUPPLY.

Cowsheds and Dairies.

Number of persons registered since Regulations came into force January, 1900.....	165
Number of persons now carrying on trade	126
„ cowsheds inspected	126
„ dairies „	25
Cowsheds having floors and drainage defective	9
„ requiring cleansing	16
Number of cows	1507
„ persons registered during the year.....	4

All cowsheds have to be lime-washed at least once a year in the month of May. To assist in carrying out these Regulations, circulars are sent round to all of the registered cowkeepers, calling upon them to comply with the provisions of the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order. Your Inspector visited all the premises concerned and found, on the whole, that the provisions are fairly well carried out. As I mentioned previously, the larger sheds are kept in the best order, and the cowkeeper finds his trade more profitable when he can assure his customers that his cows are milked under Government Regulations.

BAKEHOUSES.

There are 39 Bakehouses on the register, the same number as last year; 18 notices had to be sent out calling the owner's attention to the want of cleanliness.

HOUSING.

The following tabular statement will show the work that has been carried on during the year under consideration :—

The number of dwelling houses under and for the purposes of Sec. 17 of the Act of 1909.....	350
The number of dwelling houses which on inspection were considered to be in a state so dangerous and injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	7
The number of representations made to the Local Authority with a view to the making of closing orders	6
The number of closing orders made	1
The number of dwelling houses the defects in which were remedied without the making of closing orders.....	52
The number of dwelling houses which after closing orders were put into a fit state for human habitation	1

The general character of the defects found to exist :—

Damp walls, wet floors, want of damp-proof courses, windows too small for ventilation and light, dilapidated floors and walls, low ceilings and roofs not rain-proof.

During the past twelve months, the following villages have been inspected, and all defects remedied as far as possible, viz.:—Bromham, Oakley, Biddenham, Bletsoe,

I made somewhat lengthy remarks in my last Annual Report about the state of the houses occupied by the working classes, and suggested certain measures to improve the existing condition of affairs. I especially refer to the scheme that had been inaugurated with great success in Ireland. A large number of new cottages have been, and are being, erected, which have superseded the old miserable and insanitary dwellings of the poor. I hope the people in England are beginning to realise the importance of these measures, and the necessity for their adoption in agricultural villages of England to reduce the mortality rate of preventible diseases.

Roxton.—The six cottages to which I referred in my last Annual Report, are being constructed and are nearly finished. The cottages seem most suitable, and I trust they will be appreciated by the new tenants.

The Council have decided to erect six cottages on the land that has been kindly given by a generous landlord. These are now under course of construction and will be finished in a few months.

The addition of these twelve new cottages in this Parish should relieve the congestion at present existing, but it will not alter the fact that there are many cottages in Roxton that are not fit to be occupied by families who possess children. The older type of house should only be used by those who have reached a mature age, and have acquired an immunity to many of the illnesses to which children are specially susceptible. This matter should be kept steadily before the public for them to realise that sooner or later, a very great number of the old dwellings will fall into decay and become quite uninhabitable. The question for you to consider now is, what will become of the rural population when these old dwellings are no longer available.

This war that is being carried on will, of course, affect the re-building of cottages, and it may be considered advisable for financial reasons, to postpone any further scheme for the erection of new dwellings in this or other parishes.

Another question that has arisen for your consideration is that a large number of soldiers and National Reservists are being billetted in many of our villages, causing some serious cases of overcrowding in houses that are barely fit for habitation for the original occupants. I am told the exigencies of the military situation demand this state of affairs, and it is of no avail to make any comment upon it, but I regard it with considerable misgiving as to the future.

I have previously mentioned that the housing question must be considered in certain villages, such as :—Harrold, Milton Ernest, Turvey, Willington, Wilstead, Wootton, and in addition to these, Sharnbrook and Biddenham.

I am glad to be able to report that the six houses erected at Sharnbrook two years ago have been continuously occupied, and the rents received are such as to meet all outgoings.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION OF THE DISTRICT.

The Council is composed of 38 Members, representing 41 villages and hamlets. They meet regularly every fourth Saturday. A good deal of the work is done by Committees, which save the time of the Council to a very great extent.

The inspection of the villages still continues, entailing a considerable amount of work on your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Chapman, who was appointed to the position six years ago. On an average, one village is inspected every month, and visited a second time during the following month to ascertain if the improvements recommended have been carried out as suggested. This practically means the inspection of two villages monthly.

When the complete inspection of the whole area is completed, I hope to make more lengthy remarks on the general conditions.

The Isolation Hospital at Oakley was built to accommodate 24 patients. The Military have put up a temporary wooden structure to accommodate another 20 patients. This was found necessary to cope with the increased number of patients and diseases that have occurred since the introduction of troops into this and the surrounding areas. The diseases isolated and treated for the residents in the rural district are :—Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, and Enteric Fever, but the Military Authorities have requested us to include all cases of measles and mumps arising among the troops stationed in and around the Borough of Bedford. This has entailed a great amount of extra work on the part of the staff, but the cost of each patient admitted will be defrayed by the Army administrators at the rate we charge other Councils.

During the past year, 101 cases have been admitted—33 cases of Diphtheria, 67 cases of Scarlet Fever, and 1 of Enteric Fever.

One death occurred from Scarlet Fever, and 2 from Diphtheria.

The Kempston Urban Council contributed 22 cases of Scarlet Fever, and 32 cases of Diphtheria ; making 54 cases in all.

In addition to the above we undertook the treatment of 71 cases for the Military Authorities ; 21 being cases of Scarlet Fever, 48 cases of Measles, and 2 cases of Mumps.

There is an administrative block containing eight bedrooms, besides the usual rooms and offices, in the Isolation Hospital; also three permanent blocks of buildings containing six wards, and two temporary blocks of three wards.

Dr. Rowland Coombs is the Medical Officer, and lives in Bedford, where he holds the position of magistrate, and is a well-known Medical Practitioner of long standing.

Miss Berryman has been Matron for 12 years, and is assisted by a staff of four permanent nurses, temporary nurses being obtained when required.

The Small Pox Hospital is in a very secluded place, well out of the way and yet reasonably accessible. There is an administrative block of two wards, to accommodate two persons of both sexes. The buildings are empty at present, but everything is kept ready to receive patients at a few hours' notice.

We have arranged with the Military Authorities to take any cases that may happen to occur ; and we are also in communication with the Borough of Bedford with a view to both Councils using the same hospital in the event of an outbreak either in the Borough or in our Rural District.

I am glad to report that the hospital at Oakley has at last been connected with the telephone. This will prove an inestimable boon and will greatly add to its efficiency.

There are no local Acts. The provisions of Part 3 of the Public Health Act, Amendment Act, 1890, applicable to Rural Districts were adopted in 1898, for the District as extended.

A chemical analysis of the water to be used is made by me when a certificate of occupation for a new house is required.

The cost of bacteriological examination of swabs from supposed diphtheria throats is defrayed by the Council as well as sputum from tuberculous patients; and of cerebro-spinal fluid and other pathological material required for diagnosis in cases of cerebro-spinal fever.

It has been found necessary to include Measles among the Notifiable Diseases, the reasons for which I have discussed elsewhere.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER ACUTE AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The following were notified :—

Scarlet Fever	81
Diphtheria	35
Erysipelas	8
Puerperal Fever	1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	20
Other forms of Tuberculosis	7
Measles	24
Typhoid Fever	2
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	1
	179

Scarlet Fever :—

Notifications received	81
Number treated in Isolation Hospital (includ- 9 Military)	76
Deaths	1

There have been 5 small outbreaks of this disease. At Turvey the cases were the continuation of those occurring towards the end of the previous year. I am glad to report this has been completely arrested. At Harrold and Milton Ernest 11 and 13 cases respectively were reported. These outbreaks were probably due to a few very mild undetected cases. Nowadays this disease has assumed a much milder type, making the first cases very hard to recognise, and thus giving the germs of disease chance of being disseminated. The other cases were more or less of a sporadic nature.

Diphtheria :—

Notifications received	35
Number treated in Isolation Hospital	33
Deaths	2

These are all, to a great extent, of a sporadic nature.

ENTERIC FEVER.—Two cases recorded, one of whom died.

ERYSIPELAS.—Eight notifications received ; one death.

CEREBRO-SPINAL FEVER.—One case and one death.

MEASLES.—Notifications 24 (since November), Deaths —.

This disease has been made notifiable this year on account of the troops from the islands off the West Coast of Scotland. It is a most recognised fact that measles prove a most dangerous and fatal disease among those who have not acquired an immunity for several generations. This disease is unknown among these islands, and when the inhabitants leave their home and come into contact with measles they acquire this most violent form. I therefore strongly advised your Council to apply for powers to have it made notifiable during the sojourn of the troops among us ; to this the Local Government Board have given their sanction.

Since November (the month it was made notifiable) twenty-four cases have occurred.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

The following list shows the number of cases of infectious disease treated during the year :—

Village.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Measles.	Enteric.
Bletsoe	2			
Bromham	3			
Cardington	2			
Carlton	2			
Clapham		3		
Cople	4	1		
Eastcotts	6	1		
Elstow		2		
Goldington	2	1		
Great Barford				1
Harrold	11			
Kempston R.		6		
Knotting		1		
Milton Ernest	12	2		
Odell	1	1		
Pavenham	1			
Roxton		2		
Stevington	1	3		
Felmersham		4		
Thurleigh	1			
Podington	1	2		
Turvey	8	4		
Willington	8			
Wilstead	2			
	67	33		1

	Scarlet Fever.	Measles.	Diphtheria.	Enteric.	Mumps.	Total.
Rural Cases.....	67	...	... 33	... 1	...	... 101
Kempston Urban	22	...	.. 32	...	...	... 54
Rushden		...	... 1	...	...	... 1
Union		... 1	...	...	...	... 1
Swineshead	1	...	...	...	...	... 1
Bedford		...	... 1	...	...	... 1
Ampthill.....	1	...	...	...	...	... 1
Elstow School...		...	... 1	...	...	... 1
	91	1	68	1		161

MILITARY :—

Rural		... 31	...	...	...	... 31
„ notified ...	9	...	...	...	...	... 9
Bedford	6	... 17	...	...	... 2	... 25
Goldington Hospital	3	...	...	...	...	... 3
Kempston Barracks	2	...	...	...	...	... 2
Haynes Park ...	1	...	...	...	...	... 1
	112	49	68	1	2	232

FOR MILITARY AUTHORITIES :—

	Kempston Barracks.	Bedford R.D.	Bedford Borough.	Goldington Hospital.	Haynes Park.	Total.
Admitted.....	2	... 40	... 25	... 3	... 1	... 71
Discharged	1	... 36	... 17	...	...	... 54
Under treatment (Dec. 31st)	1	... 3	... 8	... 3	... 1	... 16
Deaths.....		... 1	...	...	...	... 1

FOR THE BEDFORD RURAL DISTRICT :—

Patients under treatment (January 1st)	7
Total Admissions	101
Discharged	84
Remaining under treatment (December 31st)	22
Deaths (Scarlet Fever)	1

FOR THE KEMPSTON URBAN DISTRICT :—

Patients under treatment (January 1st)	5
Total admissions.....	54
Discharged	56
Remaining under treatment (December 31st)	2
Deaths (Diphtheria)	1

For the Bedford Borough :—

Total admissions	1
Discharged	1
Under treatment (December 31st)	0
Deaths	0

For Bedford Workhouse :—

Admissions	1
Discharged	0
Under treatment (December 31st)	1
Deaths	0

For Swineshead :—

Admissions	1
Discharged	1

For Rushden :—

Admissions	1
Discharged	1

For Ampthill :—

Admissions	1
Discharged	1

For Elstow School :—

Admissions	1
Discharged	1

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER TUBERCULOSIS.

The following were the notifications received. I have classified them according to age groups in decennial periods :—

At all Ages.	At all Ages.	Under 1.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 35.	35 and under 45.	45 and under 55.	55 and under 65.	65 and upwards.
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	20			3	6		9		1	1
Other forms of Tuberculosis ..	7		2	2	1		1		1	

On receipt of a notification, I visit the patient and ascertain all particulars as to length of time of the illness, of places visited, probable origin of infection, especially ask questions about relations, companions, milk supply, etc. I enquire into the habits of the patients, whether the windows are kept open, separate rooms are used, and other similar questions. I urge them to get as much fresh air as possible. The Council do not provide sputum flasks. In their place, I recommend the patients to use an ordinary pot or cup especially kept for that purpose and make a paper lining. I usually show one for a pattern. This paper lining is lifted out of the pot once a day, or twice if necessary, and put on to the fire. Thus the pot or cup is not soiled and requires no special cleaning, nor do the washings go down the drain as in the case of the sputum flask.

Personally, I am not in favour of the latter for use in the house in rural districts. If the patients are insured, I inform them how they can obtain treatment under the National Insurance Act. I do not think subsequent visits are necessary, nor advisable when they are well looked after by their own medical man. The general health of all the occupants of the house I investigate to ascertain if other inmates show early signs of disease.

The Tuberculosis Officer appointed by the County Council is prepared when called upon by any medical man, to give the local medical practitioner the benefit of the knowledge which he has acquired by special training and experience, and his services are at the disposal of any doctor who may be glad of a second opinion in insured and non-insured cases. He will also undertake the bacteriological examination of sputum.

In the case of a death the Sanitary Inspector disinfects the premises with Formic Aldehyde and supplies the friends with antiseptics to cleanse all infected articles.

INVESTIGATION OF OTHER DISEASES.

CANCER.—I have in other years drawn your attention to the prevalence of this disease among our midst. There have been 25 deaths which is a little above our average for the last ten years. This average being 22·9 making a death rate of 1200 per million persons; the rate for England and Wales being 700—1000.

It is of great importance for us to keep this heavy mortality prominent before the public in the hope that the cause may one day be revealed.

In conclusion I wish to tender my thanks to Mr. Payne for his assistance; and also to Mr. Chapman. I desire to express my appreciation at the manner in which he has carried out his duties, and of the zeal he has displayed in trying to put the whole District in a sanitary and healthy condition.

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

WALTER K. PARBURY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health.

March 31st, 1915.

TABLE I.

Vital Statistics of the whole District during 1914 and previous Years.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Birth.			Total Deaths Registered in the District.		Transferable Deaths.		Nett Deaths belonging to the District.			
		Un-Corrected Number.	Nett.						Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.	
			Number.	Rate.	Number.	Rate.	of Non-residents registered in the District.	of Residents not registered in the District.	Number.	Rate per 1000 Nets Births.	Number.	Rate.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1909	17748	365	365	20·5	229	12·8	2	31	25	68·4	258	14·5
1910	17619	376	376	21·3	198	11·2	1	30	24	63·8	227	12·8
1911	19223	404	407	21·1	208	10·8	1	27	28	68·8	234	12·12
1912	19260	355	360	18·6	217	11·2	0	50	23	63·8	267	13·8
1913	19296	329	333	17·25	192	9·9	2	51	19	57·08	241	12·4
1914	19333	346	355	18·36	225	11·6	2	49	25	70·4	272	14·0

Total population at all ages.....19,214 } At Census 1911.

Area of District in acres (land and inland water.....94,271

TABLE II. Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1914.

Notifiable Disease.	Number of cases notified.								Total cases notified in each locality.																																Total cases removed to Hospital.				
	At all ages.	At Ages—Years.							Cardington	Turvey	Elstow	Todington		Knotting	Bromham	Harrold		Stevington	Carlton	Cople	Willington		Odell	Ravensden	Felmersham	Biddenham	Roxton	Harrowden	Wymington	Pavenham	Clapham	Howbury Camp	Wootton	Wilstead	Thurleigh	Bletsoe	Kimpton	Renhold		Melchbourne	Oakley	Bolnhurst	Eastcotts	Great Barford	
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 45	45 to 65	65 and upwards																																					
Small Pox...																																													
Cholera																																													
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup)	35		6	21	7	1				4	2	2	1	1	1		2	4		1			1		4		2	1		3					6						33				
Erysipelas...	8	1				3	1	3				2			1	1		2								1																			
Scarlet Fever	82		12	42	18	9	1		2	8		1	2		4	11	13		3	4	8	6	1						1	1		9	3	2	1	2		1				67			
Typhus Fever																																													
Enteric Fever	2						2																	1																		1			
Relapsing Fever																																													
Continued Fever																																													
Puerperal Fever	1				1																		1																						
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	1		1																	1																									
Poliomyelitis																																													
Ophthalmia Neonatorum																																													
Pulmonary Tuberculosis...	20			3	6	9	1	1								1	1			1	1	2			1		3		1	3			1				1	1	1		1	1			
Other forms of Tuberculosis	7		2	2	1	1	1		1			1													1			1					1					1		1					
Measles	24		4	15	4	1										5				6				1		2					3					3	4								
Totals	180	1	25	83	37	24	6	4	3	12	3	5	3	1	6	18	16	6	3	13	9	8	3	2	5	4	2	5	1	2	6	9	6	4	1	2	6	3	6	2	1	1	1	1	101

Oakley Isolation Hospital.

TABLE III.

Causes of, and ages at Death during the Year 1914.

Causes of Death.	Nett Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring within or without the District.									Total Deaths whether of "Residents" or "Non-Resident" in Institutions in the District.
	All Ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 2.	2 and under 5.	5 & under 15.	15 & under 25.	25 & under 45.	45 & under 65.	65 & upwards.	
All Causes { Certified										
All Causes { Uncertified										
Enteric Fever...	1							1		
Small Pox										
Measles										
Scarlet Fever	1			1						
Whooping Cough										
Diphtheria and Croup	3			1	2					
Influenza...	3						1		2	
Erysipelas	1	1								
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis... ...	11					3	5	1	2	
Tuberculous Meningitis	4			2	2					
Other Tuberculous Diseases	3		1				1	1		
Cancer, malignant disease	25					1	1	9	14	
Rheumatic Fever										
Meningitis	3	1			2					
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	1				1					
Organic Heart Disease	37						1	15	21	
Bronchitis	16	1						4	11	
Pneumonia (all forms)	17	1	2		2		3	2	7	
Other diseases of Respiratory Organs ...										
Diarrhœa and Enteritis	4	4								
Appendicitis and Typhlitis	3					1	1	1		
Cirrhosis of Liver	1							1		
Alcoholism										
Nephritis and Bright's Disease	9						2	2	5	
Puerperal Fever										
Other accidents and Diseases of Pregnancy and Parturition	1									
Congenital Debility and Malformation, including Premature Birth	12	11						1		
Violent Deaths, excluding Suicide... ..	12		1	1	1	1	2	2	4	
Suicide	3							2	1	
Other Defined Diseases	43	3	1				2	5	31	
Diseases ill-defined or unknown	19	3		1	1	1		3	11	
Senile Decay	42							1	41	
	274	25	5	6	10	7	20	51	150	

TABLE IV.

Infant Mortality.

1914. Nett Deaths from stated causes at various ages under 1 Year of Age.

Cause of Death.	Under 1 week.	1—2 weeks.	2—3 weeks.	3—4 weeks.	Total under 4 weeks.	1—3 months.	3—6 months.	6—9 months.	9—12 months.	Total Deaths under 1 year.
Erysipelas							1			1
Meningitis								1		1
Convulsions	1		1		2		1			3
Bronchitis									1	1
Pneumonia (all forms)							1			1
Diarrhœa							1			1
Enteritis							2	1		3
Atelectasis	1				1					1
Congenital Malformations	1				1			1		2
Premature birth ...	6			1	7	1				8
Other Causes ...	1				1		1	1		3
	10		1	1	12	1	7	4	1	25

Nett Births in the year:—

Legitimate	339
Illegitimate	16

Nett Deaths in the year of:—

Legitimate Infants	18
Illegitimate Infants	7